

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 17 and 21 have been amended. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-21 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS:

In the Office Action, at pages 2-3, numbered paragraph 2, the drawings were objected to. Corrections to FIGS. 1, 2 and 5 have been requested and replacement figures have been submitted herewith. Therefore, the outstanding drawing objections should be resolved.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objections to the drawings are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

A. In the Office Action, at pages 3-6, numbered paragraph 4, claims 11-16 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 4,982,185 (Holmberg et al.; hereafter, Holmberg) in view of USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.; hereafter, Sakurai). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

It is respectfully submitted that simply being able to make any of the nodes a master mode would still be limited to only having one master node at a time, in which case, there would be no direct communication between the currently designated slave nodes. Thus, independent claim 11 is submitted to be allowable over Holmberg. Hence, claim 11 would then be allowable over a combination of Holmberg and Sakurai also. Thus, claim 11 is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USPN 4,982,185 (Holmberg et al.) in view of USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.).

Since claims 12-16 depend from claim 11, claims 12-16 are submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USPN 4,982,185 (Holmberg et al.) in view of USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.) for at least the reasons that claim 11 is submitted to be patentable patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USPN 4,982,185 (Holmberg et al.) in view of USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.).

Claim 21 has been amended to recite a device for providing communication among equal-access stations of a ring-shaped, serial fiber-optic bus, comprising: a respective interface module at each of the stations; and two respective bus connector sockets at each of the stations, each respective interface module being connected to the serial bus via the two respective bus connector sockets; wherein one of the stations is parameterized as a dispatcher station, and others of the stations being parameterized as transceiver stations, the dispatcher station including a list of all messages to be transmitted, and each of the transceiver stations having a direct-access read authorization which allows reading of data written in the transmitted messages by each of the transceiver stations, and wherein the each interface module includes a read-write memory that has stored thereon a communications controller comprising a task table that includes a number of messages to be sent in a bus cycle by the dispatcher station, an address and channel number as a subaddress of each station, and addresses of blank messages and special messages to be used to fill up the bus cycle between the last generated addressed message and the synchronization message, which is not taught or suggested by Holmberg or Sakurai, alone or in combination.

Thus, claim 21 is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USPN 4,982,185 (Holmberg et al.) in view of USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.).

B. In the Office Action, at pages 7-8, numbered paragraph 5, claims 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.; hereafter, Sakurai) in view of USPN 5,941,966 (Gotze et al.; hereafter, Gotze). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 17 has been amended to recite a device for providing communication among equal-access stations of a ring-shaped, serial fiber-optic bus, comprising: a respective interface module at each of the stations; and two respective bus connector sockets at each of the stations, each respective interface module being connected to the serial bus via the two respective bus connector sockets; wherein one of the stations is parameterized as a dispatcher station, and others of the stations being parameterized as transceiver stations, the dispatcher station including a list of all messages to be transmitted, and each of the transceiver stations having a read authorization wherein each respective interface module includes a programmable microchip having an associated erasable read-only memory, a read-write memory, and a clock generator, each respective interface module including a system connector, an opto-electrical and electro-optical converter, and a voltage source, each of the respective bus connector sockets being linked to the programmable microchip by the converter, the programmable microchip being

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connected to the system connector via signal lines; wherein the programmable microchip is provided as a programmable gate array, and wherein the read-write memory has stored thereon a communications controller comprising a task table that includes a number of messages to be sent in a bus cycle by the dispatcher station, an address and channel number as a subaddress of each station, and addresses of blank messages and special messages to be used to fill up the bus cycle between the last generated addressed message and the synchronization message, which is not taught or suggested by Sakurai or Gotze, alone or in combination.

Thus, claim 17 is submitted to be under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.; hereafter, Sakurai) in view of USPN 5,941,966 (Gotze et al.; hereafter, Gotze). Since claim 19 depends from amended claim 17, claim 19 is submitted to be under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.; hereafter, Sakurai) in view of USPN 5,941,966 (Gotze et al.; hereafter, Gotze) for at least the reasons that amended claim 17 is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USPN 4,847,613 (Sakurai et al.) in view of USPN 5,941,966 (Gotze et al.).

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on October 25, 2004
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